

Office of Group Insurance  
March, 2006 Boise, Idaho

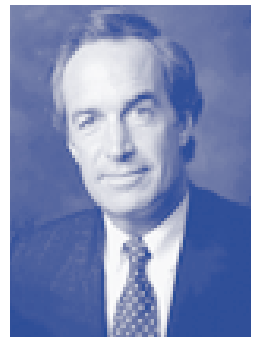
## ***Benefit Focus Update***

# ***New Wellness Program***

## **Tobacco cessation program available to state employees, retirees, and dependents**

I would like to express to all of you how excited I am that we are starting a wellness program for State of Idaho employees, dependents, and retirees. As employees and retirees, we can set a good example for our children and grandchildren who are the key to Idaho's future, and to our fellow citizens. **It is time to take Action!**

A message from Governor Kempthorne



The first phase of our wellness initiative is a tobacco cessation program launched February 1, 2006. Together, with Blue Cross of Idaho and the Idaho Quitline, free tobacco cessation counseling and low cost quit aids will be available to you. If you have tried to quit smoking before, you know how expensive quit aids can be. The tobacco cessation program provides assistance in meeting this expense by covering the cost of the quit aids following a \$10 co-pay for a 30-day supply.

For those of you who are ready to quit smoking, I commend you. Making a lifestyle change is difficult and requires diligence and support. One of my goals, as Governor, is to provide state employees, retirees and their dependents with opportunities to make healthy behavioral changes both at work and at home. Join me as we **celebrate wellness!**

## **The Benefits of Quitting:**

In addition to the immediate benefits of feeling better and sleeping better, you can reduce other disease risks by not smoking.

- ▲ After 5-15 years, your risk of stroke is the same as someone who's never smoked.
- ▲ Your risk of coronary heart disease is cut by 50% after one year.
- ▲ Your risk of lung cancer drops by as much as 50% after 10 years.
- ▲ Your risk of developing stomach ulcers drops.
- ▲ Your risk of bladder cancer is cut by 50% after a few years.



### References:

National Cancer Institute  
[www.nci.nih.gov](http://www.nci.nih.gov)

National Heart, Lung and  
Blood Institute  
[www.nhlbi.nih.gov](http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov)

American Lung Association  
[www.lungusa.org](http://www.lungusa.org)

American Cancer Association  
[www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org)

Nicotine Anonymous  
[www.nicotine-anonymous.org](http://www.nicotine-anonymous.org)

(Information provided by Centers for Disease Control)

# **‘Do it for yourself’: Idahoan quits smoking after twelve years.**



Susan Queen had her first cigarette at the age of 16. All of her friends smoked and it just seemed like the cool thing to do. Susan smoked for 12 years, quitting only once at the age of 19, but eventually going back to her old habit. Susan smoked because of boredom and frustration. She would light up at home during a commercial break, or at work after a disgruntled caller yelled in her ear. It wasn't until Susan's niece became pregnant and planned to move in with Susan that she decided to make a lifestyle change. "My niece told me it was her and the baby or my cigarettes." That was when Susan decided it was time to put out her cigarettes once and for all, not only for the baby but also for herself.

Quitting was not easy for Susan. She started to go to cessation classes at her place of employment.

"The first year is the hardest" Susan said, "I was irritable and grouchy, but I kept telling myself that I was going to quit this time."

It has been three years since Susan quit smoking. She did relapse a couple times, but found smoking disgusting after having not smoked for a while. Susan says that playing softball is now easier and she likes the fact that her clothes do not smell like smoke. Susan's advice to those who want to quit:

"Do it for yourself and do it when you are ready", Susan said. "Stick with it. It will be one of the hardest things you ever do, but it will be worth it".

Now when Susan receives an angry phone call at work she goes outside for a breath of fresh air or a walk around the block.

"I do not need a cigarette anymore. I feel great without them!"



***Information About New Wellness  
Program***

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